



*The Christian News-Letter Books, No 3*

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL  
CHANGE

*General Editor*

ALFRED R. VIDLER, WARDEN OF ST DEINIOL'S LIBRARY, HAWARDEN

## GENERAL PREFACE

THIS series of books is designed to assist thought upon the relation of the Christian faith to present problems. We live in a changing society, it is still an open question what the outcome of change will be. It is the duty of Christians to be aware of what is happening and, while the situation is still fluid, to exercise their utmost influence upon the course of events. In politics the old party lines are vanishing, and new groups are being formed. Christians ought to play a decided part both by thought and action in these developments. Those who are collaborating in the "Christian News-Letter" and who are producing these books invite all men of goodwill to join with them in an attempt to understand the principles at stake and the policies which must be pursued.

We have got as a nation to do much more hard thinking than has been our wont. It has been said that "the average Englishman not only has no ideas, he hates an idea when he meets one." During the last hundred years our general security and the settled framework of our society have made thought about fundamental principles to seem unnecessary, but now that change is upon us we must ask the big and difficult questions that have been neglected. There is no law of nature which prevents Englishmen from doing this. We shall, however, find it hard work, and the general reader, for whom these books are intended, must not expect to be let off lightly. This sustained effort of thought, in which it is hoped individuals and groups in every rank of society will co-operate, is likely to unmask truths which we should prefer to ignore and duties which we should prefer not to have to undertake.

# EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

AN ENGLISH INTERPRETATION

BY

F. CLARKE

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*Uniform with this book*

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRISTENDOM

By J. H. OLDHAM

EUROPE IN TRAVAIL

By JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

THE MESSAGE OF THE WORLD-WIDE CHURCH

By WILLIAM PAION

CHRISTIANITY AND JUSTICE

By O. C. QUICK

*First published 1940*

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## PREFACE

THIS little book has been prepared and published at the request of a number of friends who felt strongly, even before the outbreak of war, that England, no more than any other country, could withdraw from the impact of the great forces which, long gathering head, have now deployed in strength upon mankind. They realized that if a much changed order of life had to come, it would be necessary both to think out the criteria by which the elements and phases of change should be tested, and to form some picture of the concrete results of applying these criteria in the various departments of the common life.

We do not need to be told to-day that not all of our destiny is under our control. But in so far as we may be able to direct the course of events we can do so only on condition that we submit ourselves and the working presuppositions of our English society to a rigorous and radical process of self-examination. Then the negative task of clearing away irrelevancies, obsolete survivals, and pseudo-principles that are no more than the disguise of material interest, will make all the easier the positive task of formulating more relevant and defensible standards of action.

Such an effort may well run against the grain of much that is deeply ingrown in English life and habit. But there is no justification (and much risk) in any mode of thought that makes the tension between old and new

more severe than it need be. The English tradition is far from being exhausted and is of such a nature as to be indefinitely adaptable without ceasing to be itself. The form of the task is to re-think and re-interpret what we have, rather than to think out something entirely new. For the course taken by English development over long centuries makes the paradox profoundly true that if we are conservative enough we can afford to be thoroughly radical, not only without loss, but with much gain.

Honest and sustained intellectual effort along these lines is a vital part of Home Defence, unless, indeed, we are prepared to see much that we claim to be fighting for dissipated before our eyes.

This little book, in draft before the outbreak of war, has been revised in the light of this necessity. It makes no claim to originality, being rather the outcome of much discussion and criticism among friends, some of whom have had long and responsible experience in the working of education in England. If it should prove to have any relevancy or value in the present situation that merit is due, very largely, to them. But they are in no sense responsible for the book as it stands. With all its errors and indiscretions the author alone must assume personal responsibility for it, and must in particular not be taken as speaking for any institution or organization with which he may be associated.

F. CLARKE.

*London,*

*January 1, 1940.*

## CONTENTS

CHAP.

PREFACE . . . . .	.
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	.
I. THE HISTORICAL DETERMINANTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION . . . . .	.
II. THE PRESENT SITUATION . . . . .	.
III. LINES OF RE-ADAPTATION . . . . .	.

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# CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	v
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	i
I. THE HISTORICAL DETERMINANTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION . . . . .	6
II. THE PRESENT SITUATION . . . . .	34
III. LINES OF RE-ADAPTATION . . . . .	47

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## INTRODUCTION

ONE of the profoundest and most acute of contemporary students of modern society has given expression to the view that "no educational activity or research is adequate in the present stage of consciousness unless it is conceived in terms of a sociology of education".

Such a mode of approach to the study of education and the formulation of educational policy is, in England, much more consistently adopted in practice than it is explicitly avowed in theory. In actual fact, both thought and practice are much more closely conditioned by social realities which are themselves the result of historical and economic forces, than by the highly generalized principles which figure so prominently in the text-books. Such conditioning factors are none the less potent in not being explicitly recognized.

It is the purpose of this book to suggest that the time has come when they should be brought into full consciousness and be looked at squarely for what they are. In other words, we propose to accept unreservedly what may be called the sociological standpoint and to exhibit as well as we can its concrete application to the field of English education. That is, we are to attempt an interpretation, conscious and deliberate, in terms of a social economic history, and then, in the light of that interpretation, to estimate the capacity of the English educational tradition to adapt itself without undue friction or shattering to the demands of a changed order.



The argument of the book is generated in a profound belief:—

(1) That the demand will come: that it is even now upon us.

(2) That the English tradition is still capable of indefinite adaptation sufficient to meet it, that, like the wise householder in the Gospel, it can yet bring out of its treasure things new and old, and remain itself while putting forth new powers and transforming old organs to meet new situations.

The second, at least, of these two articles of belief is by no means self-evident, and may well be challenged by apostles of one or other of the New Dispensations that now compete for acceptance. It may be argued that we too shall be met in our turn by catastrophe so sweeping, or by pressure so intolerable, that the comforting self-assurance of "It Never Can Happen Here" will no longer hold, and that after the inevitable spell of destructive action we shall settle down on totalitarian hues to translate some unitary social *credo* into thorough-going practice. Even so, would the tradition cease to be operative? And would it not return with renewed vigour as it did in 1660 and absorb Reform as it did after 1832? Communism itself might come to wear a strangely familiar dress. However that may be, the present argument assumes that the tradition is capable of the necessary degree of adaptation, granted a sufficient occasion, and an adequate measure both of intelligence to recognize and of will to execute the new applications of ancient principles that will be called for.

As for the demand itself, it comes upon us now from two main directions: from home and from abroad.

The demand from within has indeed its strongly marked English character, but is itself akin to those more imperious necessities which have brought about such vast revolutionary movements in European countries. The forces to which these countries have been driven to respond with such violence and swiftness of transition are at work here too. We may make the wrong response and bring disaster, but to make no response is not possible. To make it with less awareness than we might achieve by taking timely thought is to invite confusion and accentuated conflict. For the problems that loom before us and the forces that work among us are not just Russian or German, Communist or Fascist, they are, in the ultimate resort, *historical*, the impact of history itself upon our generation, and therefore inescapable.

Even the dullest of us realizes now that this particular war is something more than a conflict of vast military forces across embattled frontiers. It is a conflict, if you like a confusion, of motives and ideas appearing in many forms within the social structure of every civilized people, and reproduced in its measure in the personal life of all except the most insensitive clods among us. The problems are the problems of Everyman.

Within the educational field, then, we have, for two main reasons, to face the task of thinking out new possibilities of a long-growing tradition. On the one side we have to work out our own response for our own people to the necessities which the movement of history has brought upon us as upon others. On the other side, we have to recognize an increasing disposition in many lands to look to England for some understanding of the rôle of education in times of sweeping intellectual and social transition, a disposition likely to be much intensified if some existing totalitarian régimes break down

and the supremely difficult effort has to be made of restoring the life of their peoples to the main currents of Western liberal tradition. In such an undertaking we could not, if we would, repudiate our share of responsibility, little as we might feel disposed to pursue it in any pedagoguish spirit. But we should need to have clear consciences about the state of our own educational pastures, and from this point of view the two sides of the demand appear as one.

The estimate we have now to attempt appears to fall into three divisions: historical determinants, the present situation, and possibilities of adaptation. Or, more fully stated, the book is governed by three main objectives:-

(1) To provide some insight into the nature of the social influences by which the forms of English educational institutions have been determined and their practical objectives defined.

(2) To formulate some analysis of the present situation in England, including: the different types of institution, the social forces they express and the kind of social aim they are designed to serve, their relationship both to one another and to "non-school" forms of educating institutions, and generally the extent to which they may be regarded at the moment as expressing certain common characteristics of the English mind now face to face with the demand for change.

(3) To estimate the degree to which the existing order is capable of adaptation to the demands that have to be faced, the demands of a régime consciously planned and directed towards the guaranteeing of freedom for diversity of personality in a social order much more thoroughly collectivist in its working than any of which we have yet had experience.

It will be clear from the above that the main concern of the book is the adaptation of institutions. Questions of teaching method will arise, therefore, only incidentally, questions of curriculum rather more directly, and questions of educational philosophy still more so. There is no reason to think, at any rate not yet, that the English habit of leaving details of method, and very largely the determination of curriculum, in the hands of the teachers themselves, will seriously weaken. There is no real indication yet of any move towards bureaucratic dictation in these matters, and the public mind is not seriously concerned about them. What it is increasingly concerned about is the distribution of education, the maladjustment of the various elements of the system both among themselves and towards the needs and possibilities of the common life, the undeveloped capacities of this element, the exclusiveness of that, and the introverted formalism of this other. The problems now under debate thus raise issues of institutional form and function. They are sociological rather than pedagogic, and therefore fall properly within the field of public discussion and action.

This book, attempting as it does some very general survey of such problems, may therefore properly be addressed to the ordinary citizen rather than more exclusively to professionals. Its interest is centred in national policy rather than in classroom technique.

## CHAPTER I

### THE HISTORICAL DETERMINANTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION

BOTH in form and spirit English educational institutions offer a striking vindication of the principle from which we set out. They reveal sociological determination which is all the more convincing and real by reason of its being taken so completely for granted. No writer on education, however much he may strive after universality of thought, can wholly shake himself free from the influences of time and place. It is characteristic of most English writers that they do not even make the conscious effort. Often in the most ingenuous way they give vigorous expression to quite English politico-social ideals while believing themselves to be discussing pure educational theory.

If the word "ideology" had not already been ruined for any precise use (having been employed so much recently as equivalent to "creed" or "doctrine"), we might cite English writers upon education as illuminating examples of it. For strictly, it would seem, the word applies to exactly this phenomenon—the undetected influence upon what is supposed to be generalized thought of the interests and attitudes of national, class and other groups by which the writer or thinker has been formed.

Sometimes, of course, in English writers, especially in revolutionary times, the political intent is conscious and avowed, as it was with Milton in the 17th and Tom

Paine in the 18th century. And the Arnolds, father and son, with prescient eye for things to come, thought and wrote in the 19th century in the light of an explicitly held social philosophy. But usually, unless they are consciously writing as political pamphleteers, our English authors show little explicit awareness of the social pre-suppositions of their thought.

Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* nowhere indicates that what he is here concerned with is the making of a Whig gentleman, and Herbert Spencer does not tell us that in his *Education* he is sketching for us his idea of a cultivated, somewhat radical, and perhaps lopsided member of the industrial middle class of Victorian England.

Even more striking examples might be given of the same trait in books—some of them systematic and scholarly studies of education—that have been written and published in England during the last thirty years or so.

It cannot be denied that there is strength in such a disposition as is here illustrated—strength issuing from the sublime confidence that is induced by an unconscious universalizing of the distinctively English. Yet to-day we cannot help feeling that that kind of strength is real and to be trusted only in the days of an unchallenged British Navy, a world-wide stable economic system, an Empire whose destinies are more or less directed from London, pre-aviation insularity for Great Britain, and no wireless anywhere. When these conditions no longer hold, as is the case now, the weakness of the disposition becomes only too apparent. It is the weakness of a lack of critical self-awareness, opposing as it does a formidable obstacle both to intelligent readjustment at home and to sympathetic understanding abroad. Continuance of

such a weakness in the conditions amid which we now have to maintain ourselves might well prove fatal. For enemies may come to a clear awareness of the "ideological" background of our thought and policy earlier than we do, and that would place in their hands a most effective weapon for the sap and mine of our position. Is it enough merely to shrink with amazed horror from the crude vigour with which the National Socialist renders his own "ideology" explicit and imposes it forcibly upon all forms of thought among his own people? We have done something like it ourselves for centuries in our educational thinking, though until now we have been under no pressure to tell ourselves so. Now we have to be quite clear about it, and make ourselves fully aware of social and historical "ideology" at every point of our thinking. Otherwise we shall have to say that it is propaganda when you are thus explicitly aware and education when you are not; propaganda when you know what you are about, education when you don't.<sup>1</sup>

As Dr. Lowe<sup>2</sup> has conclusively shown, the cult of "Freedom" which has been so fashionable in self-consciously "advanced" circles in English education shows the same unlimited capacity for swallowing whole the great mass of the facts of social determination. Seen

<sup>1</sup> The plea that we must make ourselves aware of the conditioning of our thoughts by historical and sociological factors—by our "interests", in short—must not be taken as involving acceptance of any thorough-going doctrine of relativism, such as is now becoming fashionable. Pressed to the limit, such doctrines make science an illusion, and the idea of a common humanity a disastrous absurdity. But it does mean that in any theory of knowledge sociological factors have to be taken into account; that there is, in fact, a "sociology of knowledge". Those interested in pursuing the subject further are referred to Karl Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia* (Routledge, 1936).

<sup>2</sup> In his valuable and penetrating little essay *The Price of Liberty* (Hogarth Press, 1937).

in the light of Löwe's perfectly just insistence upon the all-importance of social discipline and a large measure of social conformity in the English order of things, the prophets of "Freedom" appear like so many stage Ariels, conveying to the spectator the illusion of freely moving spirits only because the wires of social determination by which they are manipulated are undetected. Only here and there does an advocate of such freedom really challenge the accepted social discipline in his actual practice. In such cases he is either dismissed as a "freak"—fair game for satirists even less Philistine than those of *Punch*—or he is forgiven and tolerated on the ground that he is a person whose social position justifies the belief that he cannot really be serious and must be permitted scope for a little of that freakish eccentricity which so endears the English ruling class to the populace.

Signs of an awakening self-awareness are now manifesting themselves, and self-criticism takes on a much more serious and even alarmed air than that which has hitherto characterized the polite self-depreciation whereby the Englishman has been wont to give expression to his sense of "good form". The new note is neither markedly polite nor comfortably equable.

But it is still true that the really important facts of English education remain for the mass in the region of the "taken for granted". As a particularly striking example of this the Spens Report may be quoted. There is all too much truth in the Irishism that the most significant things in the Report are the things it does not say. Yet so deep-rooted is social habit, so completely lacking is any popular philosophy of education, that the profound issues of social destiny which are implied by the Report, though never explicitly raised in it, seem to have escaped general notice. Discussion is concerned



rather with the internals of school-organization, with relatively minor steps of liberalization, and with details of adjustment of school-types. Though the Report is directly concerned with secondary education throughout its whole range, the leading secondary schools of the country—those which claim to be in a special and peculiar sense representatively *national*—are nowhere discussed within its pages and no attempt is made to relate them organically to the system of schools, largely State-provided, but somehow less “national”, in which the mass of the population is educated.

So little attention has been given to this omission, startling enough in any other country, so generally has it been accepted as natural and proper, that one may doubt whether it was even intentional. How vain it is to look for the explanation of such phenomena in some formal and abstract statement of educational principle! The explanation is, of course, not educational at all in that sense, but sociological. The sources of such an attitude are to be found in the social history of England since the Reformation.

It is the purpose of this chapter to point out some of these historical determinants. But here, at the risk of labouring the obvious, it may be said in general terms that if there is a master-key for the interpretation of English educational phenomena, it is given in the word *Security*.<sup>1</sup> The habit of thinking in terms of concrete precedent rather than in terms of abstract principle (with

<sup>1</sup> “Security” here may be taken in a twofold sense. There is the physical security, only recently impaired, of the island position. (How different are the social effects of national defence by a distant and rarely visible navy from those of defence by a near and often only too visible standing army!) There is also the economic security guaranteed by a world-wide Empire, world-wide capital investment and the other familiar features of 19th-century economy.

all that this means for the preservation of continuity); the cohesion of the social class-order, with its divisions clearly marked yet connected by flexible ties, and with the steps of the social scale well fenced and guarded; the intensity and variety of group-life sustaining and bracing rather than disintegrating the national unity of the whole; the strong preference for a concrete though limited liberty over an abstract but chilly equality—all such characteristics owe their origin and persistence—in part at least—to long centuries of internal peace and external security. It is, indeed, precisely the threatened change in these historic conditions which gives point to all our re-thinking so far as England is concerned.<sup>1</sup>

It will be easier to disentangle the threads of the educational tradition which has grown up in England under these conditions if we follow some broad classification of types of educational objective. Any classification is arbitrary and imposed on the facts: none is wholly satisfactory so as exactly to fit the facts. If we have to choose one and adapt it as best we can, we may take

<sup>1</sup> Some of the studies that will have to be undertaken can be deduced from the discussion as it has proceeded so far. For example.

(1) "The Abstract in English Thought" (or "The Ideology of English Abstraction"). Its purpose would be to enquire into the experiential bases upon which thought proceeded in formulating general principles of politics, economics, education, etc. Thus a colleague at Cape Town once suggested that had the "classical" economics been worked out in South Africa instead of in England, the three agents of production would have been given as *water* (not land), labour and capital.

(2) "The Politics of Education". A study going back as far as the Reformation and interpreting English educational thought and practice in the light of social and economic forces. The 17th century would prove particularly interesting.

(3) A whole series of monographs exhibiting the educational "ideologies" of different groups. *e.g.*, Methodists, Chartists, Country Gentry, etc. The absence of a clearly defined, distinctive and generally accepted *working-class* ideology would probably be conspicuous.

that of Max Weber as quoted by Mannheim. This distinguishes:—

- (1) Charismatic education.<sup>1</sup>
- (2) Education for culture.
- (3) Specialized education.

This is not unilluminating in its application to English conditions. The charismatic, though never wholly absent, is never dominant. But there is a side of the English character, mystic and poetical, which is open to the charismatic appeal. Adapting a Mendelian term, we may say that the charismatic is *recessive* in English education. One would not expect to find it, at any rate not officially, in an institution so alive to actuality and so ready to preserve a common-sense balance by judicious compromise as is the Anglican Church. Nor would one look for it in the ruling class, except in an occasional "sport" like Shelley. It belongs most essentially to Dissent. The Methodists, especially in their early stages, expressed it strongly, but lost it with the access of respectability and worldly success, and an interest in practical politics. The Non-Jurors were strongly touched by it, and in modern times the Salvation Army gave it new and characteristic expression in terms of the psychology of the depressed classes. Its golden age was undoubtedly the 17th century, when spiritual perception and the intensity of spiritual experience reached unwonted heights in England. Great Anglican divines and Cambridge Platonists, as well as Quakers, Independents and the

<sup>1</sup> We must keep the unfamiliar term, as no other word quite so clearly conveys the idea. "Conversional" is too clumsy, and "inspirational" has been spoilt for any precise use. "Education by infusion of grace" perhaps best conveys the idea to those reared in a Christian tradition.

sectaries of Cromwell's army, provide abundant illustration of its influence.

I hesitate, having so little knowledge, to speak of its presence in English poetry. But in many of the poets, so it seems to me, it is never far away. The so-called "metaphysical" poets are under its influence, and in other forms it is traceable in Blake, Coleridge and especially Shelley. About Wordsworth there is reason for doubt, especially in view of his later years. It would seem to be particularly futile to educate for charismatic effects if, as the great "Ode" suggests, magic departs as experience accumulates. Something like Peter Pan appears to be the appropriate educational conclusion (though a profounder insight is revealed in some parts of the "Prelude").

Though the charismatic quality is thus seen to be by no means absent from the English attitude towards life—a thing not surprising in a people so given to the poetical in all its forms—it finds curiously little expression in actual educational effort. It exists, if at all, as a sort of evanescent bloom on the solid plum of cultural and practical training. Often no more than lip-service is paid to the claims of high spiritual illumination and to the attainment of personal consciousness of election; often the impulse dies away in ossified routine, or is transformed into a flame of moral enthusiasm, as with Thomas Arnold, or it enters into workable and even profitable compromise with the world such as was effected by the Quakers. If it survives at all, it does so as a more than earthly light playing over a very earthly educational scene and finding its source usually in some inspired teacher who serves the tables of daily routine none the less efficiently by reason of his peculiar gifts. The 19th century, with its hesitations and timidities and

precarious compromises, was an age of frustration for such spirits. In the 20th the charismatic tends to lose its Christian character altogether, and where the impulse towards that type of education still persists it has passed to the sectaries of esoteric cults or the impassioned prophets of queer social idealisms. Yet it is by no means dead, and if widespread upheaval should occur in Western society so as to shake violently its foundations, the disposition to reject "the world" and take refuge in small companies of the elect, each awaiting its own particular revelation, may again grow strong.

Thus we may conclude that in England the charismatic type of education has been personal rather than structural, accidental rather than pervasive. This too is probably not unconnected with a state of general security where, for men in the mass, there was little or no danger of being driven from their social anchorages and forced to take refuge in some spiritual Adullam.

We suggested above that strong indications of a charismatic attitude towards education can be traced in English Dissent in some phases of its development. But there is much else in the contribution which Dissent as a whole has made to the English tradition. Dissenters took a decided line of their own in their interpretation of what was the dominant English conception—namely, education for culture. Recently, increasing attention has been paid to the schools and "academics" organized by the Dissenters in the 17th and 18th centuries, and with justice.<sup>1</sup> For these institutions, in their aims and outlook, represent not a variant reading of the classical tradition in which the ruling class was bred, but a

<sup>1</sup> The larger academies gave an education that could fairly be regarded as of university standard. (See Miss I. Parker's *Dissenting Academies in England*. Cambridge, 1914.)

challenge to it. Shut out from teaching in universities and schools under the control of the Established Church, the Dissenters had to make what provision they could for themselves, and risk breaking the law in doing so. This they did, not by copying the grammar schools and educating themselves as *arrivistes*, aspiring imitators from afar of the governing-class tradition. They were, apparently, as unready to do this as they were to sacrifice conscience to expediency and facilitate access to grammar school and university by abjuring Dissent. Instead, they went back to an earlier precedent which had revealed itself in England and on the Continent in the 17th century. A strong wave of what we might well call "modernism" swept over Europe about the middle of that century. The Moravian Comenius was its leading exponent in education. It reached its height in England during the Civil War and the years of the Commonwealth and Protectorate. Milton's *Tractate of Education* shows strong traces of its influence.

In temper it was thoroughly realistic and one might almost say anti-linguistic. Language was for it but the gateway to a knowledge of "things useful to be known". Latin, of course, was necessary in such times as a *medium of learning*. But it was that and very little more, and the process of acquiring it was to be got over as speedily as possible with a minimum of sticking in the "grammatical flats and shallows" of which Milton speaks, and with a maximum of the pedagogical aids of which Comenius himself was so fruitful an inventor.

If this school of thought had a key idea of culture, the word to express it would be Science rather than Language. Like the ruling class they thought of education in terms of culture, but with a significant difference in content. They were less concerned with a code of

formal accomplishments distinctive of an aristocratic class and a governing tradition, and much more concerned with the specific attainments necessary for effective living *at their own social level and in their own milieu* in what they knew to be a significantly changing world. We must relate them, therefore, to the Royal Society, to the inventions of the 18th century, to the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution and to the modes of thought which gave rise to the revolutions in America and in France. It is no accident that Priestley, one of their most distinguished products, was at once a scientist of note and an enthusiastic supporter both of the cause of the American rebels and of the French revolutionaries.

The Dissenting Academies are thus of importance in English educational history as representing a vigorous and sustained effort to think out a "modern" curriculum and apply it in practice. While not departing from the dominant idea of education for culture, and while remaining thoroughly English in temper, they cut loose from the prevailing tradition of classical training and aristocratic accomplishments, looked at their own actual world with open eyes, and worked out a curriculum which would prepare for effective living in such a world. In it, as it developed, classics and the customary linguistic studies had no great place; instead, we find English, history and modern languages with a good deal of mathematics and science.

In such times this was revolutionary enough, sensible and relevant as we should regard it now. Yet, in another aspect it, too, was the continuance and development of a tradition dating from as far back as the Reformation. It is a Protestant tradition representing the educational outlook of an enterprising middle-class that had broken completely with Rome and was as objectively zealous in

business enterprise as it was firm in its adherence to Reformation principles. It grew to power in Germany and Holland and was dominant in England for a spell in Cromwellian days.

The importance of this "break-off" as we must call it, from the central classical tradition, is, for our present purpose, twofold:—

(1) It was, in its own time, a successful attempt carried out in practice to do what so urgently needs to be done now, on a much vaster scale. That is, to achieve nothing less than a re-interpretation of the content of culture in an age to which much of the traditional content has become irrelevant. We shall develop, in the sequel, some of the implications of this overmastering demand. All that we need note now is that on a much smaller scale, but with real grasp and effectiveness, a precisely similar task was carried through by small groups of energetic Englishmen working under grave disabilities two centuries ago.

(2) The achievement, destined to no great extension in a homeland where the more ancient and socially powerful classical-aristocratic tradition retained much vitality and was still capable of further adaptation, was far more widely reproduced in the newly-founded United States and in what were to become the British Dominions. The American Revolution was Cromwellian rather than classical in spirit, differing in this respect from that of France. One needs to read contemporary writings on education in America—of which there were a good many—to realize how closely akin the thought was to that which had produced the English Dissenting Schools and Academics. Anyone who takes the trouble to compare the spirit and



organization of the Academy at Warrington, where Priestley taught, with that founded in Philadelphia by Benjamin Franklin, cannot fail to be struck by the affinity. For a period, the older classical tradition continued to maintain itself in many parts of the States, and it fought a long losing battle. But in so realistic a community the end was inevitable, and the American High School to-day is a Franklin-Priestley institution rather than a transplanted grammar school.

In the Dominions the history has been more mixed, just as social motives have been more mixed. But here again irresistible influences have worked towards the triumph of the Priestley outlook, and it is now almost universally dominant.

It seemed well to devote some space to an account of this particular strand in English educational history. For we need to disabuse ourselves of the idea that the contention that "culture" may have another or more modernistic meaning than that sanctioned and made authoritative by the ruling classical tradition is a thing of yesterday. It has a history going back as far as the Reformation, and can perhaps even claim the great name of Milton in its support.

Moreover, in times when intellectual understanding and spiritual co-operation between Great Britain on the one hand and the United States and the Dominions on the other hand have become a commanding necessity, it is well to remember that in those oversea lands it is not the classical tradition but another and more modernistic English conception of culture that has become dominant in education. May it not soon appear that there are lurking sources of danger in a situation where British statesmen, reared for the most part in one English

educational tradition, are called to have intimate dealings with oversea statesmen reared in another English tradition to which all too little attention has been paid in the country of its origin? There will be less risk if the different cultural factors are known and understood in the light of their historical setting, and duly allowed for in the necessities of intercourse.

This test-example of dissenting activity may be taken as evidence of the dominant English tendency to educate for culture, even in a class that was excluded by law and conscience from the full enjoyment of cultural privilege. On the one side charismatic education was too unworldly and unsubstantial for men who differed from the main body of their fellows in little more than a claim to exercise private judgment in matters of religious belief and practice. (That is the point: religion was a *private* matter that should make no difference in business and politics, and became an intolerable nuisance only when it escaped from privacy, as it sometimes did even in England.) On the other side, to the ruling class "special" education as such was "not the thing" for gentlemen. Of course it was given. Without it no ruling class could have been so competent and so successful as that of England proved itself to be. But the aim must not be too crudely and vulgarly avowed or the gifted amateur lost caste as a professional. The ruler by nature and grace became degraded to the level of the mere expert. So the "special" education was acquired partly as an element incorporated in the "training of a gentleman" (such as languages and oratory), and partly surreptitiously as it were: not on the school bill, we might say.

The net result was that both dissenting groups and ruling class accepted wholly the conception of education

for culture, and though they did not ignore "special" education by any means, were disposed to regard it as not wholly respectable. Either the cloak of culture must be thrown over it in some way, or it must be acquired *sub rosa*.<sup>1</sup>

(In passing, it may be noted that this history has a direct bearing upon some of the problems with which the Spens Report is concerned. There are already signs of a strong, though perhaps not very open, resistance on the part of some secondary schools to the proposed new Technical High Schools. Apart from a natural dislike of competition, the motive appears to be some tradition-born idea that somehow or other what the Technical High School will offer will not be *real* education. For the pupils will there be expected to acquire, openly and shamelessly, knowledge directly useful for vocational purposes—i.e., "special" education. It is to be feared that in many quarters these new schools will be viewed not as they should be, as an honest and resolute attempt to adapt the concept of culture itself, to incorporate into it, as all vital cultures have done, new permanent factors that are bound to influence the shape of life and thought, but as upstart rivals to the only true culture.

In much the same way some secondary schools resist the idea of the "multi-lateral" school, claiming that they themselves are already multi-lateral, as their curricula offer a variety of options. Is there here no more than failure to grasp the "multi-lateral" idea? Or is there here again some tradition-born and half-analysed *suspicion*, a suspicion that the Ark of the Covenant may be handled by the unclean Gentile?)

<sup>1</sup> The phenomenon was, of course, common to all Western Europe wherever a ruling class held sway. With respect to the actual *content* of a vocationally influenced culture, a comparison between aristocratic England and republican Holland might be of interest.

It is possible to argue that the dominant English tradition since the Reformation has been one of education for culture only if we make liberal allowance both for variations in the form of the culture itself and for elements and objectives which were vocational rather than cultural. No English tradition is ever quite "pure", and the plea for a classical education as the "real thing", a purely humanist training unsullied by technical taints, is relatively modern. It owes much to Newman, and there is, perhaps, some justification for Professor MacMurray's suggestion (in *The Boundaries of Science*) that the cult of "knowledge for its own sake" tends to arise in a society which is quite ready to accept the techniques of a new order, but not ready to accept any essential change in the structure of an existing order, nor to allow the displacement of a standard culture in which it has a vested interest by one which would transfer the social advantages to another class. If that is so, then the plea for knowledge for its own sake becomes socially suspect as the dress of an interested ideology. Just as the freely-contracting "individual" of 19th-century liberalism—so it may be argued—was the expression of a *bourgeois* interest, so the ideal of a disinterested student pursuing knowledge "for its own sake" may express the interest of a régime which has the strongest reasons for not wishing to see new knowledge used *instrumentally* all along the line—that is, in social and political reconstruction as well as in the provision of scientific techniques. If it is ever true that so fine-sounding an ideal should be in reality just a decorative cloak to cover a not disinterested timidity, some explanation is afforded of the devitalizing of curricula. In such conditions studies are the material of a defensive façade, rather than the source of instruments of positive social

action. They come more and more to lack *direct relevancy*, a lack which cannot wholly be concealed by modernistic changes in the spirit in which they are taught.

Whether, in answer to this, we should follow Dewey in taking the view that *all* knowledge is instrumental and nothing but instrumental, is a question upon which we will not enter. Here we have only to note that the modern justification of the classical tradition as "education for its own sake" obscures two important qualifications that are revealed by the historic record. One is that the classical-humanist education was deliberately given, especially from the 18th century onwards, as an appropriate training for a *vocation*—that of rulers. Locke leaves us in no doubt of the vocational intent. For him Latin is "necessary to a gentleman".<sup>1</sup> And so it was, together with much else that the accepted training included.

The other qualification is contained in the fact that the classical curriculum in the form of the grammar-school tradition provided the substance of education for many who were certainly not of the ruling class. These were the professional classes, clergy, schoolmasters, lawyers, physicians. The "clerkly" tradition of the Middle Ages continued in this form, and has by no means lost its vitality even to-day. So the element of "special" education enters even in the great days of education for culture, and the best-known Bidding Prayer of the Anglican Church, with its reference to men trained for service, is quite frank about it.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He goes on to express a blunt opinion that it is of little or no use to anyone else, thus emphasizing the vocational character of his criterion.

<sup>2</sup> Two more studies here suggest themselves. One would deal historically with the *social implications of training for the professions in England*, and would endeavour to relate the spirit and content of

As for the trading and manufacturing classes, the story is still not clear until the 19th century is well on its way. Further reference to them will come later. Enough has been said to show how shot through with compromise the prevailing English version of education for culture has been.

This is not to deny that the prevailing classical form certainly *was* education for culture and highly successful as such when social conditions were favourable. But it never lost its class character, it was never *national* in any comprehensive sense and is not so to-day.

At the same time, it never lost its character of compromise with the "special" and vocational. When in the 19th century a serious risk that it might do so arose, the position was saved by the new middle class, finding in such men as Arnold and Thring schoolmasters able to weld effectively the spirit of the traditional humanism with the complex demands of business and politics and administration and professional services in an indus-

such training to the prevailing social structure and the interests of its ruling elements. The four professions mentioned above have usually shown strong conservative tendencies and a marked disposition to ally themselves with the ruling order. How far were such tendencies the result of an education more or less consciously designed to produce them? Are similar tendencies to be remarked among, say, electrical and chemical engineers, members of quite modern professions which are free from these historic influences? The other study would concern itself with the trading and manufacturing classes. It would enquire how far *their* interests were met by the traditional curriculum, what steps they took to bring about departures from it and to demand school forms more directly adapted to their needs, and in particular how these classes, at their upper and middle levels, came to accept, in the 19th century, the traditional education so completely as to occasion the rise of a whole crop of new "public" schools. And how was the traditional education itself affected in spirit and aim and content by this large influx? Reform at Oxford and Cambridge would provide a significant part of the story.

trialized nation which had now also to govern an Empire. The result is best typified, not at all in Tom Brown of Rugby, but in men like Sir Robert Morant, a great civil servant in the direct line of descent from the Chadwicks and Kaye Shuttleworths of the Reform Era in the 'thirties. Middle class in origin, and with a professionalism of spirit and *expertise* quite alien to the amateur temper of a ruling aristocracy, they were nevertheless trained in the traditional curriculum. But with a difference: their teachers were no longer "pure" scholars, linguistic savants or literary "appreciators", but *politici*, men deeply concerned with the social and political problems of contemporary life, steeped in philosophy, and well able to generalize the mature thought of the ancient world in terms of contemporary necessity. The Oxford of the days of Jowett and T. H. Green and the establishment of a rigorous system of selection for the higher civil service belong to the same phase of social-cultural history. Government had become too complex and specialized for the day-to-day handling of its details by aristocratic amateurs. But the ruling class did not surrender the function, it turned to a new source of supply for the necessary professionals, taking care, however, that these should be trained in that same classical tradition by which they themselves had been formed.

What was not so clearly noticed in this development was its effect upon the educational attitude towards the classical tradition itself. The vocational (or "special") import that it had never wholly lacked was strengthened. Without ceasing to be linguistic and literary, it became more philosophical, with attention concentrated both on the substance of ancient thought and achievement and on the relevance of these to the contemporary situation. Moreover, its philosophical content was studied in close

relation with modern European philosophy. In a word, we may say that the whole tradition was *re-assimilated* to the needs and conditions of a complex industrial and imperial society that was becoming steadily democratized in politics without losing its character as a social aristocracy. The "cultural" and the "special" were thus re-welded in the light of changed social necessity, and the type it has produced in such numbers entirely merits the confidence and admiration it has evoked. It is a type, cultivated, steeped in philosophy and history, aware of its world politically and intellectually, and *interested*, in a deeper sense than either the scholar or the aristocratic amateur could claim to be. Yet it combines effectively the qualities of both, and has in addition the advantage of professional experience.

Does not the rise of such a type illustrate admirably the English refusal in education to concentrate upon the production of a narrowly specialized expert, whether scholar or technician? It will have culture, but it will also have competence and power to discharge a skilled task responsibly. There is strength in such a position, Philistine enough to be a little contemptuous of a "pure" culture that can do nothing in particular, and cultivated enough to have a healthy distaste for "mere" efficiency without style or grace of action.

If this really is the English attitude, reluctant to countenance any policy which isolates culture from practical effectiveness, does it not afford some hope that we may be equal to the great task which now challenges all our powers of educational synthesis? We have not merely to absorb into an expanded conception of culture the technical developments of the last fifty years and all the consequences for life and society that they have brought. We have rather to achieve a real synthesis



between two conceptions of culture, both of them inherent in the intellectual movement which dates from the Renaissance. Now and again, in times of upheaval and widespread scepticism about traditional values, they have come into sharp conflict. In times of social peace and prosperity, on the other hand, the conflict is apt to retire into the study and become just a theme of debate between opposing writers. But now the issue will have to be fairly joined, and a synthesis effected which will determine not only educational policy but social and administrative policy as well.

The two conceptions here in question may be described sufficiently for our purposes as the *literary* (or classical) and the *scientific* (or "modern"). The one goes back to Plato for its inspiration, and, thoroughly Greek in spirit as it is, lends itself to the education of an aristocratic order. The other, though it too has its affiliations with Greek thought, is, in its experimental spirit and its devotion to what Francis Bacon calls "studies for the relief of man's estate", a product of the Renaissance.

The continued existence of "sides" in English public schools and of separately organized first degrees of B.A. and B.Sc. in most English universities, shows that we have not really effected a synthesis. And it is still possible in England to take a queer kind of apologetic pride in "knowing nothing about science", and to suffer no hindrance in social and political advancement in consequence. One cannot help feeling that the whole national attitude towards science in education needs to undergo drastic revision. Science has to be thought of not as a mysterious and highly complex cult, pursued by highly specialized "scientists", not as a many-sided magician producing wonders for the populace and

profits for the enterprising, nor yet as a technical necessity of modern life for which, however reluctantly, any self-respecting school must make some provision. It is rather *modern life itself* in one of its most fundamental aspects, and therefore an essential basis of a modern education for everybody. Not the whole basis by any means, but an essential part of the whole.

The achievement of a true synthesis and the applying of it to education may involve considerable changes not only in the content of studies but also in methods of teaching. Further, the distribution of scholarships at the university level will have to come under review.

From the standpoint of this wider perspective, it should be possible to estimate how far, and in what sense, the proposal of the Spens Report for the establishment of Technical High Schools is a real contribution towards a solution, or rather whether it is a further step *away* from the needed synthesis. And when we contemplate the pressing problem of an effective relating of techniques and technicians to the real needs of a modern society through the medium of government, we catch a glimpse of the task which lies before the universities.

It is a task much greater than, though akin to, that which they achieved in the 19th century when they adapted the traditional classical training to the production of professional public servants who were at once efficient and cultivated. But it is a task which, in a very special sense, falls to the universities of this country.

But this is over-running the next chapter. Let us re-emphasize the main point, that, while the conception of education for culture has been dominant in England, it was never wholly dissociated from the conception of a "special" education for clearly-defined practical functions. A comprehensive re-definition carried through in

the mid-19th century brought the two conceptions into still closer unity and probably prepared the way for a further synthesis, not yet fully achieved, of the cultural with the technical. The agents in this highly important achievement of Victorian society were (1) Schoolmasters like Arnold and Thring, capable of re-interpreting the traditional content of the classical curriculum in the light of contemporary needs (2) The universities, especially Oxford (3) The new generation of public schools. (4) The "reform" spirit in government, affecting as it did both political parties. (5) "Publicist" writers like Matthew Arnold and others—all too few of them—who faced squarely both problems at once: the problem of culture and the problem of social and governmental efficiency. Whether contemporary writers in our own age can rise to the same heights of vision and show the same courage in casting off, where necessary, inhibitions of class and prejudices of culture, is a question upon the answer to which much may depend.

When we turn to "special" education as practised in England, not surreptitiously and in disguise as for a ruling class but direct and avowed, we come upon a significant sociological fact "Special" education is that which is provided for the poor and for the mass of the people in the interests not of culture but of *usefulness*. Until quite recently an ancient popular culture, with naturalistic and Christian elements indiscriminately intermingled, was strong in England. It is the culture of the fairies, the legends, the folk-songs and dances, the seasonal customs, the nature lore and the proverbial wisdom of rural England. Till about the middle of the 17th century or a little later one may say that it was at the base of English life and a fruitful source of material for literature. Shakespeare's work is full of it. Milton's sophistication could

not resist it. Bunyan drew from it the structural substance of his great allegory, and it was a 17th-century bishop who wrote the poem beginning, "Farewell, rewards and fairies". It survived Puritanism and it survived the sophistication of the 18th century and the Whig Oligarchy. True, it achieved this latter feat at the expense of becoming to the school-educated *élite* something sentimental and pathetically picturesque, as it was to Gray in the "Elegy". In that phase it is painfully like the view of the countryside as seen by the town week-enders from the windows of his rustic cottage as he writes to *The Times* about rural desecration - a scenic background which exists primarily for the satisfying of his own aestheticism.

But though it survived Puritanism and aristocratic cosmopolitanism and sophistication, it could not survive the Industrial Revolution and the institution of a national system of schools. It never entered the schools at all until quite recently, when it was already practically dead, and certainly unintelligible to the large mass of urbanized children. (The cynic may say that this is typical, that nothing ever does enter the school curriculum until it is already manageably inanimate.) Now, having lost most of its native social and historical associations, it has become little more than a field of quasi-archaeological study by groups of enthusiasts organized for the purpose. What survives of it may well be its musical idiom, caught and preserved just in time by Cecil Sharp, and incorporated in modern English music. For the rest it has already passed into history, and those of us who are fortunate enough to have acquired some tincture of it from early associations know that we cannot pass it on in living form to our children. Dickens might have been a pioneer in the exposition of a corresponding folk-

culture of the towns. But the school, the cinema, the radio and the popular Press have defeated any such hope, and the "people" must either share a common culture with their betters or have none at all.

It is such considerations as these which give weight to the urgency of the need in England for a genuine *popular philosophy of education* such as exists in the United States and in some at least of the British Dominions. We shall return to this later. But here it may be stated that the mass of the English people have never yet evolved genuine schools of their own. Schools have always been provided for them from above, in a form and with a content of studies that suited the ruling interests. It is not surprising, then, that the avowed purpose of such schools until quite recently was to induce usefulness rather than culture. Existing popular culture was wholly set aside as idle and trivial, and the "utilizable skills" of reading, writing and arithmetic together with simple craftwork and much moral teaching (with a strong emphasis on the virtue of obedience) provided the staple. Even today the legends and fairy-stories are a little suspect in many schools as out of keeping with usefulness and moralizing tendency. The Charity Schools of the 17th and 18th centuries and the elementary schools of the 19th century were all alike devoted to the same end, and the elementary school of today, struggling towards a more adequate cultural conception, is still under the influence of this *damnosa hereditas* operating strongly even in minds that would call themselves liberal.

The passing of the Education Act of 1902, while it opened up a route to the secondary school and the university to the elementary-school pupil, at the same time offered the prospect of a new spaciousness and breadth of culture to the elementary school itself. The

first issue of *Suggestions to Teachers in Elementary Schools*, published by the Board of Education not long after the passing of the 1902 Act, may be taken as a manifesto declaring the generous humanism which now governed the official attitude. The establishment, under the "Hadow" scheme, of a senior phase of elementary education, together with the raising of the school-leaving age to 15 and the erection of school buildings, planned to provide scope for the new humanism, have served to make the elementary school still more potent as the seed-ground of a genuine popular culture. Further, a body of teachers is coming into existence well qualified to interpret and convey the essentials of such a culture in terms of the life of the area which the school serves.

But the effects of a long past during which it was the rule that the many should be schooled for the service and convenience of the few are not thus easily to be thrown off, even if that past is no longer with us, as some would contend that it still is. Hitherto there has appeared no sure sign of the growth of a genuine popular philosophy of education which would seize upon the elementary school and make it the instrument of its own clearly conceived social and cultural purposes. The good things still come as gifts from above. Some will even give expression to uneasy doubts whether the habit of looking to the governing class ("they" who do this and do that to us and for us) for benefits and concessions is not so deeply ingrained as to be ineradicable. Are the "people" they ask, really *interested* in the elementary school as they might be interested in a trade union or a club or a "co-op", as a thing of their own to be shaped to their social purposes? Or is it only "getting on" in which they are interested, as they seem to show still more plainly in their attitude towards the *secondary* school?

These issues must be taken up later. Here we are concerned only with a history and its obstinately resistant effects.

The place and prospects of technical education in the development of English society will be considered later. It is "special" education in a rather new sense, still free from the limiting influence of class associations and full of yet unrealized promise as a powerful agent in the creation and propagation of a class-transcending culture.

Reference must be made, before closing this chapter, to one other unhappy consequence of the semi-servile, non-cultural level upon which the education of the masses of the people proceeded for so long. Shut off almost entirely by lack of access to higher education from careers above the normal working-class level, they quite naturally took the new facilities provided under the Act of 1902 as offering the chance not of achieving a generous humanistic culture, but of rising in the social and economic scale. Indeed, what else could have been expected? So now we have the spectacle of a frustrated secondary school, designed to provide a liberal culture for selected pupils and seized upon by ambitious parents as a sure, if thorny, path of advancement for their offspring. This is one of the ironies of history, surely. The offer to suitably equipped members of the masses of a share in what had hitherto been the culture of the privileged is seized upon and converted into a new form of the old "special" education. "Getting-on" seems to be a half-sister of servility. No wonder there are those who believe that the hope of a genuine common culture at a reasonably high level is more likely to be realized through the senior schools, the technical schools and diverse facilities for adult education, than by a secondary school frustrated from one side by its out-of-date and

out-of-place apeing of the old "privileged" tradition, and from another side by parental ambition which sees in the "ladder" steps not to Parnassus but to a secure job and a villa in Suburbia.

The position of the secondary school is, indeed, crucial, and we shall have to return to it. The function it serves as an instrument of social selection is quite indispensable, and this must be performed at the secondary stage of education. More than any other institution the secondary school carries the weight of the problem of reconciling the "push" of legitimate ambition with the claims of culture. The problem is never perhaps wholly soluble, but there are encouraging signs that the secondary schools are increasingly aware of its pressure and becoming better equipped to face it.



## CHAPTER II

### THE PRESENT SITUATION

In the preceding discussion it has been found necessary to refer occasionally in some detail to the facts of the present situation as illustrating the effects produced by historic forces. It will now be convenient to develop these references in the form of a survey of the interplay of influences as it presents itself to a contemporary eye.

We may begin with a brief catalogue of the institutional forms of educational provision at present functioning in England --

(1) A national system of "elementary" schools, derived from the 19th century and now (a) expanding and specializing itself at both ends, at the lower end by the growth of nursery schools and re-integrated infants schools, and at the upper end by the development of senior schools (11 + to 15) under the Hadow re-organization, leaving the junior school (7 to 11 +) in between: (b) re-interpreting itself as an institution for the communication of a *basic common culture* rather than as one for the guarantee of *lower-class usefulness*, and finding in the process an urgent need for the prolonging of systematic education well into the years of adolescence

(2) An extraordinarily complex system of "secondary" schools (*i.e.*, "secondary" in the technical administrative sense, which from any purely *educational* point of view is as illogical as it is ill-defined. The Spens Report could not fail to recognize this).

The diversity here presented is in no sense *educational*. It is important that this should be understood. For "secondary" education in England is suffering severely, as the Spens Report again recognizes, from a grave lack of genuine educational diversity. The newer schools, staffed in many cases by men bred in the old tradition, and often under the influence of governors of the same cultural stock, have tended to follow only too faithfully the model of the ancient schools, "public" and "grammar." In this they have not been discouraged, if not actively encouraged, by their lower middle-class and upper working-class *clientèle*. In British colonies, especially in Africa, strong suspicion is revealed of any attempt to adapt secondary education to local needs and conditions as concealing a design to rob aspiring pupils and parents of the hope of achieving "caste". The same suspicion was strong until recently even in England, towards attempts to work out special secondary curricula suitable for the education of girls. Now today it is active among the classes of the population whose hopes of achieving status are founded upon the new facilities that were opened up by the Act of 1902. Overwhelmingly the driving force is the desire for *status* rather than for education as such. Within broad limits any kind of curriculum will be accepted so long as the successful study of it achieves this. It is not easy, in view of all the circumstances, to condemn the attitude of the socially aspiring in such a matter. They are not to blame either for a very natural ambition or for accepting the conditions, not determined at all by them, under which alone the ambition can be satisfied.

The result has been a certain failure on the part of the secondary school to seize its full opportunity. Obsessed too often with an idea of "education for its own

sake" which in point of fact derived very largely from the peculiar position of a small leisured class, and a notion of the "true" content of a liberal education which failed to take note of the extent to which this curriculum was really designed to serve the vocational needs of a ruling class of cultivated amateurs, it has so far not fully grasped its true social purpose. As we might expect, this is less true of the girls' schools than of those for boys, but it is truer than it ought to be for all alike.

It should have been recognized that if the new aspirants were to become members of a ruling class at all it would be a ruling class of quite a new kind, needing a new kind of discipline; that the social origin and conditions of home experience of this great new body of pupils differed widely from those of pupils of the older "privileged" schools and therefore called for a different educational treatment; and that, in general, the situation called for a determined effort in a society so constituted to transcend a distinction between culture and vocation which was itself an integral and necessary element in an older class inheritance. As for the parents, so long as the all-important issue of the achievement of status was not compromised they would have accepted a curriculum which gave to John or Mary a truly *relevant* education, even though it departed somewhat widely from the traditional curriculum, provided that John and Mary could obtain the School Certificate equally well on either course.

So the problem of *relevant adjustment* still faces us after nearly forty years' experience of the new conditions. Happily the Spens Report reveals a clear grasp of the situation and quite justly apportions to the Board of Education a large share of the blame for the failure.

For it was the Board's own Regulations of 1904 which gave official sanction to the view that the new schools were to follow so closely the model of the old.<sup>1</sup>

It is necessary to make this much clear at once in view of the crucial importance of the new "secondary" schools for the coming order. We can now return to the task of discriminating roughly the various types of "secondary" school. The differences, as has been noted, are much less educational than they ought to be. They are rather social, historical, and administrative. We may thus distinguish —

(a) The "public" schools, falling perhaps into the two groups of the greater and the less, with the boundary line at the lower end sufficiently vague, except in so far as it is marked by membership of the Headmasters' Conference. These schools regard themselves as "national" in a special and almost exclusive sense and are disposed to regard public service as limited to the ranges—the upper ranges generally—in which they themselves are interested. They are intensely jealous of their private and independent status, and have hitherto been little disposed to assimilate themselves to

<sup>1</sup> The criticism here formulated must not be construed as placing the responsibility solely upon those directly in charge of the schools. The preceding chapter will have failed in its purpose if it has not shown that the result here criticized was inherent in the English social situation itself. The secondary schools have themselves played a great part in the transforming of that situation, perhaps as great as they were allowed to play, and it was only natural that they should have begun by very largely accepting it. Thirty years or more ago there were few Englishmen who did not, in real fact, accept it.

Not the least of the many values of the Spens Report is the clear realization it exhibits that an epoch has ended and that English secondary schools are now in a position to form an adequate idea of their permanent function in English society. We return to this in the following chapter.

the State-controlled system which they have tended to regard as being "for the people" rather than "national". Liberal movements towards the breakdown of exclusiveness and a wider conception of the truly national are by no means lacking, but they seem unable to make much headway against the weight of an oppressive inheritance, or against the pressure of the *clanlike* for the social privilege which the schools are regarded as able to guarantee. In their present condition the public schools are much more the tied prisoners of their own history than the stage villains they are sometimes represented to be, bent on slaughtering in its infancy the unwanted child of an upstart democracy.

(b) The State-controlled schools. These again fall into various groups. Many are provided and maintained by local authorities. Many others, chiefly old grammar schools re-habilitated, are classed as schools "aided" by local authorities. Still others remain administratively independent of the local authority and receive grants direct from the Board of Education. But all alike, as sharing in public funds, are required to reserve a certain number of "special places" for pupils selected at 11+ from the elementary schools.

Allowing for certain local and special differences we may regard the members of this group as very much alike educationally, bound together as they are by the strong common tie of the School Certificate, a goal to which the great bulk of their pupils aspire.

(N.B.—Grave dissatisfaction is widely felt with the mode of selection for special places. Proposals for reform are discussed in the next chapter.)

(c) The "private" schools This again is a somewhat motley group. It includes all those schools which regard themselves as "secondary" (though taking often many pupils not of adolescent age) but are neither "public" nor State-controlled. A good many of them are inspected and, if satisfactory, "certified efficient" by the Board; a few are "freak" schools; of many very little is known.

It is difficult to see how, in a re-constituted order of things, any of these schools can be left altogether free of public supervision.

(d) Junior Technical Schools These may be included here, though their claim to "secondary" status is sometimes contested. They take pupils (mainly boys, but some girls) at the age of 13-14 and prepare them in a three years' course for a specific trade or group of trades, taking care at the same time of the claims of general culture. Though their number is small—they exist only in large cities—their importance as an educational experiment is increasingly recognized. What they are trying to do is now better understood, being nothing less than that transcending in practice of the vocational-cultural distinction which we now see to be of such urgent importance. The experience gained by these schools provided the Spens Committee with grounds for proposing the further experiment of Technical High Schools. Of this proposal something must be said later.

(3) Institutions of "Further" Education. Of these there is a bewildering variety, covering either part-time or full-time courses. They include: technical education, senior and junior; evening institutes, senior and junior; adult education of a more systematic and continuous

kind than that given in evening institutes; day continuation schools, art schools; and some other varieties. All of these are in some form or other "recognized"—that is, they are supported by local education authorities and rank for grant-aid from the Board of Education. Their relation to the full-time "ordinary" school system varies. Technical courses are closely related, most evening institute courses can hardly be said to be related at all. Much of the provision has come into existence to meet demands of almost endless variety, including not only play-acting and keep-fit classes, but even such interests as pigeon-fancying.

(4) Informal organizations. The term is used to include a very numerous and widely varied body of community activities, not necessarily designed for an expressly educational purpose, not usually aided from public funds or controlled by public authority, but having nevertheless real educational value and importance. These include such organizations as Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, women's institutes, young farmers' clubs, community centres in town and village, B.B.C. listening groups, dramatic societies, ramblers' clubs and many others in rich abundance. Co-ordinating machinery, like that of the National Council of Social Service and the recently created Youth Organization, exists to preserve some unity of direction and to promote mutual help.

Most of these organizations are new in that they arise in response to novel situations brought about by a rapidly changing social and economic order. The needs to which they are a response are deeply felt rather than clearly defined, and though the various types are, as a rule, each served by some loose form of national co-ordination, little has yet been done to bring about co-ordination as between the different types or to relate

them in any organic way to the regular national system of educational facilities. Such links of the latter kind as do exist connect, on the official side, with some form or other of "further" education.

The whole of this rich modern growth is full of interest and is now receiving serious attention from students of social change. It testifies to continuing social vitality, to a continuing power of adaptation and creation in response to need. The relations in which it is to stand to more systematic (school) provision for education remain still undetermined. But developments seem to be moving towards the creation of some kind of Ministry of Culture, not indeed to reduce the natural jungle to a trim totalitarian garden, but to minimize wasted effort, to increase effectiveness, and above all to interpret and direct institutional action of whatever kind that has a distinct educational bearing so that it may contribute towards the ends of a genuine common culture. English habit would not take kindly to the institution of such an authority. But the needs of freedom itself in a planned society may require such action, and there seems to be nothing in the idea that is wholly irreconcilable with established English ways.

When we add to the above list the cinema, the radio and the theatre, we get a fuller measure both of the range of the possibilities and of the problem of co-ordination and harmonized inspiration. But the B.B.C. is there to witness that in one important field at least the principle of central guidance has been conceded. Since the B.B.C., on one important side of its organization, works in close touch with the schools and with bodies directing adult education, the development of its activities will need to be studied with particular care just because of the great possibilities that may open out



if the principles of its action can be applied to other far-reaching cultural agents. With the B B C. in such vigour and with such fruitful contacts it will be flying in the face of experience to allege that central guidance of cultural agencies is as impossible in England as it is alleged to be undesirable.

(*N.B.*—The universities are omitted from the above account, as it is felt that they call for separate treatment. Moreover the course of change which they follow will be determined even more by developments in the general school system than by any independent play of social influences upon them. The charge that the universities, through matriculation demands and in other ways, exercise “tyranny” over the schools arises from a misreading of the forces. So-called “tyranny” is, in substance, a response to the real desire of the community. It is not the universities that have caused the matriculation certificate to be so widely demanded for entrance to employment, and the schools could at any time overthrow a “tyranny” that they were not, at heart, prepared to accept.)

It is not proposed here to discuss methods of administration. They will need to be reviewed, of course, but in general they are so well established and so congenial to English habit that they are likely to adapt themselves readily enough to new tasks and new needs.

In closing this chapter one illustration may be given to throw light on what some would call the rich diversity, others the caste structure, of English educational tradition. If by the term “educational system” is meant a series of school stages or separated avenues by which one may pass to the university, then England has at least *three* rather sharply segregated education systems. These are:—

- (1) Home governess: preparatory school; public school.
- (2) Elementary school: State-aided secondary school.
- (3) Private school or schools.

These are routes entirely separate from one another, touching nowhere until they reach the university. Composites of two of them are possible, such as—

Private school    State-aided secondary school (common)

Preparatory school: State-aided secondary school (less common).

Elementary school: public school (virtually unknown).

So far as we are aware there are no studies of English social structure and class distinction which have set themselves to estimate with some precision the real social effects of these diverse routes to the goal. If their diversity arose, as it is sometimes claimed to arise, from healthy desire for originality and adventure in educational effort, this might well be cause for congratulation rather than misgiving. But it can hardly be seriously maintained that this is so. The segregation is surely to be explained on social grounds, and it might well be argued that the three routes traced above might be expressed as —

- (1) The Free Front Door.
- (2) The Side Entrance
- (3) The Front Door on Conditions.

Criticism of such a state of things is probably misdirected if it fastens upon the mere fact of the existence of alternative routes. There is nothing inherently anti-

social in such an arrangement taken by itself. Indeed, it is easy to see that it may hold out positive advantages not offered by a single "end-on" system of *grades* such as finds favour all over North America. English habit would not take kindly to such a system in any case.

What is open to criticism is the comparative absence of cross connexions between the different routes, the virtual exclusion of the great mass of pupils in the senior schools from any of them, and the fact that certain of the routes lead more surely and directly than others to social advancement and positions of authority, even apart from any purely *educational* superiority that these more favoured routes may be able to claim. We can hardly continue to contemplate an England where the mass of the people coming on by one educational path are to be governed for the most part by a minority advancing along a quite separate and more favoured path.

Nothing quite like this exists in any British Dominion or in the United States. Indeed, it would be hardly intelligible in such lands. Its continuance is probably doing more harm to English social unity and to English relations with the world than many other much more noticed and openly criticized influences. Yet what an illustration it is of the English disregard of the "taken for granted" that such a phenomenon, so far from being closely studied as a profoundly important index of English life and education, is seldom even referred to in any but highly professional circles!

The immediate problems of co-ordination, re-direction and re-inspiration which have to be faced can be better discussed in the wider perspective of the next chapter. The most urgent of them is that of *selection*, of determining at the age, say, of 11 + who shall proceed to full

“secondary” education and who shall continue in some form of “post-primary” education of lesser esteem. There is widespread dissatisfaction with the present form of selective examination at 11 + and, very significantly, a growing conviction that what is of primary importance is not so much reconstruction of the machinery of selection to fulfil its present purpose, as a complete reconsideration of the question as to what selection is to be *for*. In other words, the question “Who is to be taught what by whom and how?” must be asked in respect of the whole child population, and with especial point and precision at the beginning of adolescence. Selection thus loses its present “sheep and goats” character and becomes rather a systematic *sorting* by criteria of aptitude and ability as distinct from prerogatives of class. For a community one of whose central problems is now the *democratizing of aristocracy*—that is, the preservation of aristocratic quality and temper and standards in its government and social functioning while using only democratic criteria in its devices for social selection—the issue is all-important. We shall return to it later.<sup>1</sup>

Cognate with this is the task of providing a suitable diversity of forms of educational treatment at the adolescent stage with both parity of status and ease of transfer as between one type and another. The Spens Report makes important recommendations on this head. But as these seem to presuppose that educational readjustments such as it suggests precede rather than follow corresponding social change, the practicability of its suggestions is open to doubt. It is surely a little naive to

<sup>1</sup> We say “one of whose central problems” so as not to overlook the even greater problem of preserving unity and fellowship and public-spirited service in a democracy as a whole which thus organizes itself for the progressive and continuous evocation of its own aristocracy.

imagine that in the present state of English society real parity of status can be established between the "modern" school for the unselected goats and the "grammar" school for the carefully selected sheep.

A third pressing task, now that the school-leaving age has been raised to 15, is to fix a suitable *terminus ad quem* for the senior school. This will not be easy, as the pupils who pass through these schools—the great majority of the child population—are very mixed, representing many types of interest and levels of ability, and there is a strong and salutary desire not to introduce any set leaving examination into these schools. A solution may be found in a better integrated system of "further" education the facilities and opportunities of which might exercise much the same steadying and consolidating influence upon the senior school as do the demands of the universities and the professional bodies upon the "grammar" school.

Finally, there is the great task of adapting the regular school system to the still-developing structure of technical education. The way to that is hardly clear yet, but the importance of the task is now becoming better understood.

## CHAPTER III

### LINES OF RE-ADAPTATION

THE question now to be faced is the inevitable one that many people are beginning to ask themselves more or less explicitly. The resources of English life and culture, English government, English industry, English education, have in the past shown fruitful capacity for adaptation to the challenges of new tasks and new situations. With more or less of improvization and with more or less of significant reaction back upon society, they have served to weather this storm and that and to come through one ordeal of change after another while still preserving the same recognizable traits, sustaining the same kind of society and reacting to the same sort of impulses. But now the old security has gone and the demands to be met, involving as they do not only adjustment to far-reaching technical change but comprehensive "extra-national" adjustment to a whole world which in becoming one is transforming our ideas of national sovereignty and Empire alike, will certainly call for changes in social relationships that can hardly take effect without much friction and conflict. How far can the existing educational order be adapted so as to facilitate these changes and to sustain and nourish the new order as it comes into being?

The discussion which follows must be regarded as wholly tentative, for there are many incalculables in the situation, and while the statement of a view may call for

courage, it calls also for caution, lest hasty revolutionary impulses should lead to the destruction of much that is valuable and capable of incorporation into the new order.

Whether the form of society here contemplated is "classless" or not is a question over which we need not linger. The answer to it will depend, obviously, upon what we are to mean by "class". If the term is to mean a group the members of which carry privileges disproportionate to their functions, whether too much or too little, we may say at once that we look for a classless society. But is it not precisely this habit of thinking about education in terms of class which has made our educational categories and terminology the chaotic thing they are? Our thinking is likely to be much more relevant both to actual social necessities and to the values of education as an instrument of social control and transformation if we keep it clear of any distracting ideas of a rigid class-structure.

Our handling of the topic of this chapter may take the form of a setting out of the main changes which, as it appears, the educational system will have to undergo if the traditions it embodies are to be re-valued and re-interpreted so as to preserve and enhance social cohesion and to generate the social power which the necessities of a changed order will call for. We can set them out under a few comprehensive headings —

#### (1) *Unification of the System over the Whole Range.*

In view of the characteristically English fears which may be aroused by the use of that ominous word "unification", we would affirm at once that it means just what it says—a making one of that which is now far from

being one. It does not mean the subjection of all education alike to the bureaucratic control of a central State authority. Such a thing seems so little possible in England, of all countries, that one is led to wonder why the fear of it should so often find such vehement expression.

It is not possible here to give more than a broad indication of the main framework of the unifying that we have in view. Its leading idea may perhaps be expressed as the adaptation of a modified form of the principle of *l'école unique* (as the French call it), with due regard for English concern for a wide diversity of school types. In other words, the adaptation in England of a common "end-on" principle providing for equal access to suitable forms of education must be qualified by certain essential guarantees of freedom, such as the freedom of individual schools to use and develop their resources in accordance with their own expert judgment of the needs to be met, and the freedom of parents within reasonable limits to select the schools to which they will send their children. Mere multiplication of separate schools is not desired so much as the securing of a system where all essential needs are freely met, and within which adaptation of provision to educational need is sure and easy.

With this proviso, and with some reservations as to details to be made later, we now suggest that the time has come to bid once for all a wholly unsentimental farewell to the term "elementary" as applied to any branch of English Education. So long as we continue to use the word not only will the old hampering and increasingly obsolete "class" associations continue to infect our thinking, but we shall be prevented from viewing with clear eyes that great field of *secondary* education in which



our main task of reconstruction lies. The Hadow Report and the Spens Report should have taught us by now to think of secondary education as one whole design planned to cover the requirements of the entire adolescent population. Thus if the school-leaving age is fixed at 15, and provision is then made for continued educative control after that up to the age of 18, this further provision should still be regarded as falling within secondary education even though it may contemplate forms of training not carried on in a school at all.

Our thinking should, indeed, set out from this conception. Instead of stretching an "elementary" system and producing a "senior" school that is something quite other than that highly selective senior school to which above we give the name secondary, we should *begin* our planning with the essential problem of adolescence and adapt the earlier stages of education to the form of provision we choose for the later stage. What is happening now, however, is that inherited habit, still embodied in the existing school system, tends to intervene between us and a clear sight of the needs of adolescence as a whole. If, putting the matter at its lowest, the achievement of a genuine common culture at a fairly high level is becoming a matter of life or death to us, and if that achievement implies common norms of education in freely accessible schools, why do we hesitate? The dropping of the term "elementary" and all that it connotes would do much to remove the scales from our eyes so that we should recognize the "senior" school as secondary and the "secondary" school as only one kind of senior.

Once this conception is firmly grasped (and it is easy to delude ourselves that we have grasped it when we have not really done so), a further suggestion that is

even more startling presents itself. Why should the "break" between junior and senior stages come at 11 +? Is not the idea that it should do so also influenced by inherited habit and the associations that cling about the word "elementary"? Suppose we were starting all afresh with no inherited "elementary" presuppositions but with the knowledge that schooling was to continue for everybody up to at least the age of 15. Should we still fix the "break" at 11 +, and perhaps find some version of the psychology and physiology of adolescence to justify it? Or should we not rather set ourselves to extract the maximum of educational value out of those precious ten years from 5 to 15, *treated as one whole*, and arrange for "breaks" at points determined by the nature of the progression in the education itself? Experience unaffected by "elementary" presuppositions and undistorted by special pleading about the "onset" of adolescence would seem to suggest that for the normal child with normal schooling the age of 9 is a more appropriate point for a break than that of 11. By this time he will have gained command of the rudimentary tools of knowledge and his physical system is in a stage of hardening and consolidation which makes him capable of a high degree of sustained energy. Moreover, if the essentials of a worthy common culture together with at least the beginning of personal and vocational specialization are to be satisfactorily achieved, a six-year period of "senior" schooling is none too long. Experience in schools other than the "public elementary" has shown that at about the age of 9 a boy can make a start with his French, his elementary mathematics and elementary science, can begin to broaden the range of his reading and to broaden and refine his powers of craftsmanship and manual skill.

On the other hand, there is a widespread feeling that the last two years in the "junior" school as at present organized (down to 11 -|-), though they are far from being wasted, are not as usefully occupied as they might be (sometimes, indeed, they are spent in feverish cramming for secondary school scholarships<sup>1)</sup>). With the break coming at 9 rather than 11 +, there would be a prospect of more advantageous economy in the use of these two years. The break, let it be noted, implies a change of *schooling* rather than a change of *school*. There will continue to be schools, perhaps an increasing number of them, which retain pupils throughout the years 9 to 18, taking in other pupils at various recognized levels. But the point to emphasize here is not so much the need for a diversity of *schools*, as the need for substantial agreement on the *stages of education* whatever the school may be.

A further break, or at least a pause for review, would come at about 13. From 9 to 13 the scheme of studies would have necessarily to remain broadly uniform for all alike, with however increasing watchfulness, taking all the conditions into account, to discover the lines of further education most suitable for each pupil. At 13 there would be a drafting of some to the junior technical school, some to the technical high school if it comes into being, some, especially those destined for the university and the professions, to grammar schools which will already have taken in some pupils at 9 and will keep many until 18 or more. And if the public schools should be willing to draw their own recruits from the common national pool (the units of which will already have had four years of relevant preparation), and if they are put in a position to do so, the age of 13 should suit them well enough.

On the other hand, if the break at 11 + really is decreed by Nature and not secreted as it were by the workings of English social chemistry, then we must accept it. If we are to be logical and obedient in our educational arrangements to Nature's laws, we must also accept the consequences. "Secondary" schools must be forbidden to receive pupils before that age (whereupon many of them will go off to private schools) and the public schools must bring their entrance qualification down to that age (and so disturb very seriously the age-group balance of their school-body and increase enormously its internal problems)

Looked at from the point of view here taken the break at 11 + seems to be obviously calculated to make the worst of both worlds, junior and senior. Does not every consideration, especially prophetic consideration of the demands of the future, call for a reversal of the prevailing division of the years, to *four* junior and *six* senior instead of the other way about?

This, then, is the framework of ideas governing a compulsory minimum of common full-time education from 5 to 15. We ask for a complete and final abandonment of the word "elementary" and all the ideas which, in England, have accompanied the use of it, for the division of the ten years into four junior and six senior years, and for a point of review at 13 when pupils whose full-time education is to continue beyond the compulsory minimum will be allocated to the appropriate school or section of a school. It is devoutly to be hoped that the public schools may, in time, come to share in the general sorting process at this point.

Even if these ideas are generally accepted (as they will probably not be), they will take time to carry into execution. But we should at least hope to see some

degree of adaptation along these lines where existing conditions do not raise insuperable difficulties.

It has seemed well to sketch thus broadly the main organism free from complicating details. We must now go on to note some consequential adjustments of, and developments from, this central mass. These can be set out only very briefly here, though it is recognized both that any one of them might provide material for a considerable book and that many matters of detail cannot here be touched upon at all.

Three aspects of adjustment call for particular mention —

(a) *The "Full" Secondary School.*—That is, a school taking its pupils as early as 9 years of age and retaining them until 18 or more. It would be organized into preparatory or junior (9 to 13), middle (13 to 15) and upper (15 to 18) schools. Pupils would enter from other schools at 13 to 15 and would normally be intending to pass on through the upper school. The great development of Sixth Forms in recent years opens the way to the organization of an upper school of this kind rich in diversity of opportunity and increasingly related, at its upper end, to the requirements of the universities and the professions.

The relegation of School Certificate to the status of an internal examination, taken along with the fuller development of the upper school, should free the "middle" school from the cramping influences of an external examination designed on pre-university lines, encourage a greater diversity of curricula, and make possible a much closer integration of present-day "secondary" and "senior" types.

The technical high school, if it comes into being, should fall into this class rather than into that of technical

institutions as such. It will differ from the more academic type of school in having as a rule no preparatory section, and in being closely related in all its work both to industry and to the large technical colleges. But it must be essentially a *secondary* rather than a professional school, devoted to its peculiar significant task of the humanizing of techniques, a pioneer in the work of incorporating new technical elements, with all their implications, into a developing common culture.

As for the *junior* technical school as it now exists, there would seem to be no case for any radical change in its work and status if a general scheme of organizing education on lines such as those indicated above were followed. It would share in the selection of pupils at the 13 point and would retain them until 16 unless, as is likely, it developed an upper school and retained some at least of its pupils until 18.

(b) "*Transfer*."—It has already been made clear that a good deal of transfer from school to school will be involved, especially at the review point of 13. But transfer is not necessarily and in itself a good thing. An increase in the number of "full" secondary schools and a process of assimilation between the present "senior" schools and what is here called "middle" secondary would reduce the need for it.

Perhaps too much has already been said in the Spens Report and elsewhere about the attainment of "parity" as between the various types of secondary school. The debate is apt to be barren and unreal except in so far as social cachets and "caste" urges interfere with the sovereign claims of *relevancy of training*. Just as the State uses its power and influence to protect the young against such things as disease, under-nourishment and economic exploitation, so it should use them to protect all alike

from the misdirection and maladjustment, that may arise from unsuitable training.

It is less likely to succeed by a frontal attack on snobberies and prejudices than by unceasing emphasis in all its procedure on what we have called *relevancy of training*. Many a parent does not find it easy to allow a just estimate of the real interests and ambitions of his child to override his own social ambitions on the child's behalf. It is in the interests both of the child and the community that the State, in its attitude and actions, should give him strong inducement to do so.

This seems to be a convenient point at which to say something about the public schools. It is misdirected criticism which concentrates the attack on them on points of purely educational alertness and competence. The truth is that many of them are even more sensitive than some other schools to new demands and possibilities. They are in general alive and vigorous educationally and are continually adding to their already rich facilities. The real point of criticism is not that the education they offer is bad, but that it is so good and so much needed that it ought to be more generally accessible. Their standards of truth and honour are high and real, even though in application they may go a little awry through intellectual limitation or the unconscious influence of class-prejudice. In such a world as this, that alone is no small treasure. Also there have been many signs of late of a quickening and expanding social sense, together with a weakening of complacency and uncritical self-admiration.

The real demand that the public schools and their pupils have now to make upon themselves is one for the frank acceptance of *full exposure*. They need to realize how much of their achievement and prestige is to be

ascribed to social privilege rather than to sheer educational virtue; to realize also what they lose by *under-exposure*. For privilege is always attended by its nemesis. In a society so organized as to offer a generous uncovenanted bonus for a white skin or for good fortune of birth the penalty upon the receiver is, in the long run, debilitation and a false estimate of his own powers. The public-school boy starts life with peculiar advantages not necessarily because he is inherently superior but just because he *is* a public-school boy. There would be justice in this if the public schools came fully within the area of national selection, taking their pupils out of the common pool as a result of the sorting process referred to above. If they continue to stand out they will become more and more the object of resentment as wishing to be advantaged both ways, and as narrowing the range of "national service" unduly to exalt their own prestige and to serve their peculiar sectional interests.

The choice before them is indeed a hard one. But in the society that is taking shape they cannot be both class-schools and broadly national. The choice may be, indeed, painfully like that set before the rich young ruler, but they will go away very sorrowful indeed if they choose wrong. There is no honest defence, no democratic defence, indeed no genuine *aristocratic* defence, for the continuance of their present position. To continue it against all the forces that are coming into play will both intensify social conflict and weaken the power of Britain to co-operate with the other free peoples of the world, even with those in the British Commonwealth itself.

That for the negative side. On the positive side cannot one feel that there is a great store of ability locked up and as it were potbound in the public schools,



awaiting release for full exercise in the wide and truly national field? When the staffs of public schools do find themselves free to take this comprehensive view and take the full measure of the field within which their powers and energies should be available, one may look for a great access of strength to English education generally.

(c) "*Continued*" Education—It has long been clear to those who have studied the needs of youth and of a modern society in relation to youth that ten years of full-time schooling, even if all the time is used to full effect, cannot be sufficient to achieve all the results that education must now aim to produce. For consider what has to be done: attainment of a sufficiently high level of acquirement to participate with mutual advantage in the common culture; command of techniques, both those which are general to the community and those which are special for the individual vocation; knowledge of the nature and sources of *power* in the modern world (a great matter this, touching much of science, mathematics and geography as well as history and "civics"); insight into the motives and forces of individual and community action, together with trained moral perception and the integration of all that is learnt into the stable volitional structure that we call Character: these are only some of the objectives that have to be striven for.

Some parts of the task cannot even be attempted before the age of 15, not for lack of time but for lack of maturity and breadth of experience in the pupil. Also there are valuable forms of educative experience which no school alone can really provide, such as adequate contact with a variety of social types and the kind of naked exposure to testing circumstances which is all the less likely as school itself becomes more generously pro-

tective. And for many a boy and girl the restraints of even a good school begin to chafe a little around the age of 15. Such pupils may be needing the discipline of the stern restraints which come from a more raw and unmediated contact with the world.

Considerations such as these point to the need for the maintaining of some form of educative control up to at least the age of 18. The coming of compulsory military service will have a significant relation to the fulfilling of such a need. The establishment of a national youth organization is a further recent and important step towards it.

It would be disastrous if we thought of the necessary organization in terms only of the compulsory "Continuation Schools" that were set up by the "Fisher" Act of 1918. This did embody the principle, it is true, but a far wider diversity of provision is needed now. What is wanted is a generous and flexible system of wise and friendly *tutelage* drawing freely upon every kind of social resource that can be brought into its service. It might even be found discreet not to talk about "schools" at all in this connexion more than is unavoidable.

We do not propose to detail here the many forms of existing social power that might thus be drawn upon. Though they are numerous, new forms may nevertheless have to be invented. Fortunately, there is every promise that the whole range of possibilities will now be surveyed. So we need say no more here except to express the confident hope:—

- (i) That the survey will be exhaustive and complete both in its grasp of the nature of the service to be provided and of the potentialities of available resources.
- (ii) That it will not build its plans on the assump-

tion that the existing system of compulsory full-time education will remain as it is. If it does do so, it will not achieve its full objective.

*N.B.—Nomenclature.*

Before proceeding farther, it seems well to insert here a warning about the havoc that may be wrought in our thinking by the tyranny of routine terms. Mention has already been made of the cramping and distorting effects of such terms as "elementary" and "Continuation School". But "secondary" is quite as bad, and there is almost no limit to the disastrous play that could be made with "technical". Just as it would improve our political thinking if we could dispense for a while with the sounding hollowness of words like "democracy", "international", "pacifism", "collective security" as they are very generally employed, so it would improve our thinking about education if we could shake off the narrow provincialism that so often goes with the glib use of the official administrative terms. We might then see more clearly the growing boys and girls of the nation in the light of their real needs in the sort of world they will have to live in. Rather daringly, and perhaps a little mischievously, it may even be suggested that one effect of so doing might be a significant change in the relationship of the various bodies of organized teachers - which now reflect still too faithfully the sectionalisms that arise from the dominance of official terms.

(2) *Transcending of the Cultural-Vocational Distinction*

The maintenance of this distinction, tracing its descent from a slave-based economy, can be no longer tenable in a modern industrial democracy where (i) *all* are to be "free"; (ii) freedom itself becomes increasingly depen-

dent not only upon technical mastery but upon the humanization of techniques. It is necessary that the working social philosophy should include within itself both an understanding of the techniques themselves, in the proper scientific sense, and an intelligent idea of the appropriate subordination of each to the common social purpose. The choice lies between a world which, like Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World", has surrendered its hold upon real culture in order that it may apply techniques to the more exquisite satisfaction of animal appetites, and a world which adapts its techniques to the enrichment and wider dissemination of a growing contemporary culture. To any vital and organic society its vocations are *structural*, not *accessory*. Slave-based societies fail because there is too little interpenetration of culture with vocation. Culture is sustained in such societies not by the significant and contributory vocational activity of those who share the culture but by technical contributions of a slave-class or proletariat which is largely excluded from it. Where integration is satisfactory a culture may indeed be known and recognized by its vocations, as we understand the Middle Ages or the culture of a long-vanished society by examining the memorials of craftsmanship that its workers have left.

So least of all can an industrialized democracy afford to countenance so fatal a dichotomy. The compromise which English aristocratic humanism worked out between the classical curriculum and the vocations of ruling is not applicable to such a society. It needs something more modern, more relevant, more direct, and above all less vitiated by class influences (a proletarian prejudice is as much to be condemned in this connexion as an aristocratic one).

Experiments in the working-out of "trial forms" of

such a desired transcendence may fall to the lot of various institutions in England. Thus

(a) A suitable *exit-ramp* from the senior school needs to be constructed. Where conditions are favourable, the senior schools are already relating their work quite intimately to the dominant vocational activities of the neighbourhood, and in many cases their curricula well repay study as examples of attempts at vocationalized-culture or culturally-interpreted vocation, whichever way we like to put it. But this in itself is not enough. The blade still lacks its cutting edge. In present circumstances the edge may be either not put on at all, or put on in a fashion which damages the cultural substance of the blade. So we need a well-diversified provision for "junior technical education" appropriately related to the needs and attainments of pupils as they leave the senior school at 15.

(b) The technical high school as proposed by the Spens Committee needs to be established at first in the limited form which the Committee suggests. It will have to be ready to stand up to some prejudice on the part of those who have no understanding of its purpose and no sense of the urgency of the need for it. So a struggle may be involved in giving it a fair chance *in its own field*, neither pushed into a "workshop" corner, nor treated as a mere variant of the grammar school. It must be *sui generis*, the bearer of the burden of an urgent social experiment as well as a pioneer type of school.

(c) With increasing understanding of the needs as the changing social-economic situation develops, the whole system of technical education can come under review with an eye to the more effective co-ordination

of its parts and more precise definition of its relation to the "ordinary" schools.

(d) The "ordinary" schools, especially in the later stages, will, in their own courses, set themselves increasingly to the integration of vocation with culture. The necessary freedom is already secured. In the existing "elementary" schools the will is present and understanding of procedure grows. The "secondary" schools, embarrassed heirs of another tradition, move more slowly and with misgiving. But they *are* moving, in some cases moving so fast as to convince themselves that they can take care of the whole vocational need of their pupils, sharpening the blade as well as forging it. If such an idea is really held to any considerable extent it may well prove harmful.

(3) *The Consistent Application to Curricula of the Test of Relevancy.*

Relevance of material—that is, in relation to aptitudes of pupils, needs of social well-being, and especially to the *conditions determining freedom* in a modern industrial democracy.

The most momentous example of such testing is that which the traditional classical curriculum must undergo. Large volumes would be needed for an adequate treatment of this issue. Here we need only note that representatives of the tradition are not as a rule themselves well placed to apply the test with objective dispassionateness. They would find it difficult to shake off the influence of associations of this particular curriculum with class-supremacy and they still tend to accept uncritically, and even with a certain unction, the belief in knowledge for its own sake. Sometimes they are de-

ficient in generous and responsive social sense and in understanding of the contemporary situation, while a perfectly genuine and not ungrounded fear of vulgarity and the cruder form of blatant utilitarianism often frightens them into obscurantist conclusions

It is society at large that will have to decide the issue, and there appears to be not much doubt what the decision will be. This curriculum does not meet the contemporary tests of relevancy sufficiently well to justify the retention of its dominant position. In the first place, the claims for a common culture are too insistent, and for the great mass of the population the classical curriculum is quite without relevancy, except in so far as in the courses in English and history provision is made for intelligent study of the ancient inheritance. Then the thrust towards a new and more comprehensive, if not highly equalitarian, form of national unity will tend to become irresistible, bearing down in its progress the social barricade of which the old studies provided so much of both the decoration and the substance.

And finally the requirements of a technical age cannot be gainsaid, especially as they can be met, if wisely handled, with profit rather than with loss to culture, while the atmosphere of a technically planned society will prove uncongenial to studies which have so strong a savour of a feudal order. The ancient languages and literature will still be the subject of specialized study by selected pupils. The secondary school course should acquaint all pupils alike with some of the literature in translation, and those who plead that Greek rather than Latin is the more relevant study for these times may well prove justified. But the full classical curriculum in its old form seems destined to lose very soon its place of predominance.

Towards the field of "technical" curricula suspicions will be directed and will have to be watched. Already there are suggestions that the technical high school is unwanted, as the secondary school, it is argued, can, with a little adaptation and a little co-operation with existing technical colleges, do all that is necessary and without any risk to culture. This is one danger. The converse one may take the form of an attempt to assimilate the new type of school to the grammar-school type, just as the new secondary schools after 1902 were assimilated to the public-school type. These dangers are by no means imaginary. In so far as they continue to threaten, the true significance of vocation in this modern society has not been grasped.

So the courses of the new technical high schools will need to be drawn with courage and imagination and with a clear and single eye to relevancy. Buildings, staff and equipment must take form accordingly and then, if necessary, the new citadel must be defended with all resolution.

One main-spring of danger, all along the line, is undoubtedly a dogmatic and over-academic orthodoxy, occasionally so ingrown as to be quite incorrigible.

#### (4) *Change of Basic Attitudes.*

This is too wide and too ill-defined an issue for any full consideration here. But such changes will have to take place if the necessary social and administrative adjustments are to come into effect. Important among them is a changed attitude towards State action, somewhat along the lines advocated by Matthew Arnold. In many fields of social action the change in this regard has already gone far. Even in respect of national education



it is accepted by the ruling interest in so far as it applies to schools attended by the mass of the people. At the boundary line of schools of the upper level it stops short. One still hears the old denunciations of education in a strait jacket, of Whitehall bureaucracy and of the blessings of unregulated diversity. And this in an England where the State has been operating vigorously in education during the last forty years with the result that no two counties are alike in the individual interpretation they have each worked out of a common national policy for the mass

We feel tempted to follow up some other obvious changes in social attitude such as are likely to have important effects. The psycho-social causes of a falling birth-rate, striking change during the last forty years in the public attitude towards Empire, and the drift of "internationalist" feeling, are all examples. But these and others must be left as material for a separate study

The development of a popular philosophy of education is perhaps the most relevant example that could be given of an urgently needed change in basic attitudes. It is unlikely, in England, that such a philosophy would be sharply antagonistic to that which has been dominant hitherto. Its function would be to provide over the process of unifying the values of culture and usefulness, and to secure that, in so far as the educational system is an instrument of social selection, the criteria it applies shall be purely educational and used with no irrelevant bias.

### (5) *The Nature of Social Cohesion*

We have been thinking of education throughout in a predominantly social aspect, as a process conducted and

conditioned by social forces, all of which have a history, and aiming at the further development of the potentialities of worthy living in a community. We have looked at English educational institutions in the light of their determination by historical forces and have sketched out lines along which they might be adapted, with generous foresight, to meet the needs of social cohesion in the much more pressing and dangerous form which these are about to take

In short, it may be said that we have been guided by a conception such as Milton in his grand style expresses so eloquently in the famous *Tractate*: "I call therefore a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, all the offices both private and public of peace and war" Generously interpreted (as it is clearly meant to be), this glowing statement would appear to give us all we need, but this little book would be even more lacking in unity than it is if we did not add that Milton himself in his great definition still does not touch directly the deepest and most essential things. Society of course must be served, and education is there to provide for its cohesion and continuance. But we have still to ask: *How* does it cohere? and why should it *need* to cohere?

The ultimate concern of education is with the answers to these questions. The answers lie deeper than the customary level of politics, in regions of which most current sociological doctrines take little account.

Let us look first at the second question: *Why* should English society continue to cohere? The answer is so simple in form and so religious in expression that to some it may appear mere evasion, to others mere unctious. It is: "For the making of souls." One recalls Keats' comment repudiating the idea that this world is a vale

of tears and insisting that it is rather "a vale of soul-making". Many things, including some suffering, are necessary to that process, but it is the end for which society and all its functions exist. Let us not claim too hastily that even the totalitarians deny this. That is at any rate their concern. It is for us, as English, to know what *we* mean by it and to see in it the criterion of all social action whatsoever. The enemy is not only the totalitarian. He may also take the form of administrative efficiency for its own sake, of idolatry of mere instruments, of an undetected provincialism that subordinates the greater loyalty to the less and sets institutions and "interests" above men. Against all these, faithfulness to what we mean by a "soul" and recognition of the sovereignty of that demand over us is the only safeguard.

To the other question *How* does society cohere? a variety of answers has been given. Some would say "Just by habit," to which the response might be, "like the herded animals". Others would say "By a unitary *credo* and Acts of Uniformity". To that most of us would reply that this is to nullify the purpose in the choice of the instrument. Still more "realistically", others would say that society is held together by force, and by ruthless force if necessary.

In answer to this we need not deny that there must be a sword in reserve, that there must be limits to toleration in the most liberal of societies, and even that, where nothing else will serve—if that ever is the case—force without stint may have to be used. But what a grim universe it is to fashion man in such a way that though society is indispensable to him he hates the necessities of it and has to be driven by ruthless force to accept them! Yet something like that is being widely said to-day.

Or again, it may be urged that Law holds society together. How far does man-made law really constitute a security for the rights of men—that is, law by itself? Can it be guaranteed as a protection against the invasion of one by another? And what if it should actually sanction such invasion? Does that then become right and proper? And in that case what becomes of the criterion of social action that we have laid down?

These are days of social experiment on a vast scale and under conditions of extreme pressure. Some of the doctrines that are put forward to explain the nature of social cohesion are now being subjected to test, and we have an opportunity of estimating their validity. In a year or two's time the opportunity may be better still.

Do any of them really draw the sting of Cain's passionate cry: "Am I my brother's keeper?" Why should I be? The answer is not so easy as it is often made to appear, though it *looks* simple enough. We shall not secure unity by an education which sets itself assiduously to "teach the laws of social cohesion" in a set scheme of social studies, though that is valuable enough. Some indeed of the recommendations one hears on this matter sound like proposals to understand the nature of commerce by an investigation of the working of a ship's engines. They take the machine for its justification.

Perhaps the answer is that there can be no answer in set terms, so deep do the forces lie. But if we may venture a tentative answer in terms so simple and platitudinous that they seem absurd, we would say "By faith and love". The terms look empty enough until they receive their proper content. No definition or social science or system of law can confer that content. It can be given only by life and sound education and the grace of God.

It may be, then, that the most essentially religious thing in us is that by virtue of which we cohere as a society, and that here is the heart of education's business.

Lastly, let us remember that the bonds which will hold a regenerate England together are greater than England itself, as man is greater than his own institutions. Here is our real security. A realization of it is the true safeguard against all the dangers of a complacent or exclusive nationalism. If the furnace of war serves to mould and establish that faith in us we shall not have gone through it in vain.

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